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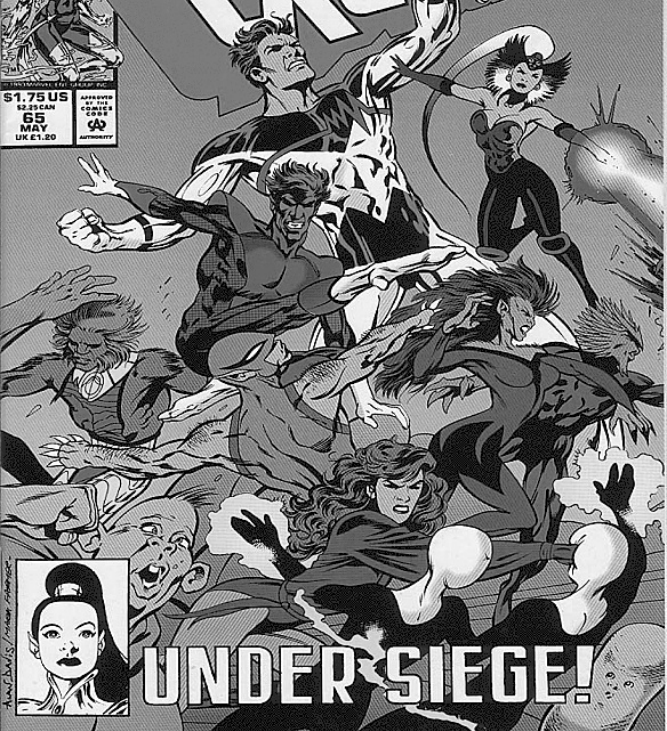
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EXCALIBUR



UNDER SIEGE!

THE POWERFUL CAPTAIN BRITAIN, THE SHAPE-CHANGING MEGGAN, THE INTANGIBLE SHADOWCAT, THE TELEPORTING NIGHTCRAWLER, THE MYSTERIOUS PHOENIX, THE EVER-UNPREDICTABLE WIDGET AND LOCKHEED THE DRAGON FORGED IN THE FIRES OF THEIR TRAGIC PASTS, THEY HAVE BANNED TOGETHER TO FIGHT A MODERN DAY CRUSADE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL! STAN LEE PRESENTS...

THE GREAT CAPTAIN BRITAIN!

HUMBLY PRAYING FOR THE LIFE OF HIS IDOT COON-CUBINE.

DESPERATE TO AVOID FOR THE INJURY HE BELIEVES HE HAS CAUSED, PREPARED TO FOLLOW ANYONE WHO MIGHT LEAD HIM FROM HIS PIT OF GUILT AND MISERY.

PATHETIC, ISN'T HE?

BUT I WILL MOLD HIM. I WILL PUT IRON IN HIS SPINE.

I WILL FORGE HIM INTO THE TRUE PATRIOTIC SYMBOL OF OUR GREAT LAND.

EXCALIBUR

Stan Lee Presents
WHITE LIES, DARK TRUTHS

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AND HIS HEROIC REPUTATION WILL GIVE THE R.O.X. A PUBLIC IMAGE TO WHICH THE MASSES CAN RALLY.

WHAT ABOUT NIGHTDOOMER? I DON'T TRUST HIM, PETER.

AS A STUDENT OF CHARLES XAVIER, HE MAY BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE SOME OF HIS TEACHER'S KNOWLEDGE TO OUR RESEARCH. ULTIMATELY, HE IS EXPENDABLE.

PETER... PETER...

ANSUS! HOW DARE YOU INTERRUPT. LIKE AND I ARE IN CONFERENCE.

I'M SICK, PETER, PAIN'S ANYWAY BAD

I'M MURIN, PETER. I'M MURIN...

HE'S DESTABILIZED THAT MAKES SIXTY-SEVEN VICTIMS TO DATE.

ABERDEEN ANSUS IS ONE OF OUR STRONGEST PARAHUMANS. I HAD HIGH HOPES FOR HIM.

TOO LATE FOR THAT. AT THE RATE HE'S REVERTING, HE'LL SOON BE HUMAN.

I WILL PREPARE CAPTAIN BRITAIN FOR HIS ROLE IN THE DEFENSE OF OUR REALM.

I KNOW THIS GENETIC DESTABILIZATION IS THE FIRST COWARDLY ATTACK OF SOME COVERT PARAHUMAN ORGANIZATION.

WITHOUT HIS POWERS, HE WILL BE OF NO USE TO OUR CAUSE. HAVE HIM PLACED IN STASIS WITH THE OTHERS.

THE PUBLIC MUST BE PREPARED FOR THE INVASION THAT WILL FOLLOW.

MEANTIME, IN ONE OF CLOUD NINE'S NUMEROUS RESEARCH LABORATORIES...

IT'S AFTER 3:30 A.M., NICHOLAS. I'M EXHAUSTED.

YES, OF COURSE. I WANT TO FINISH ANALYZING THIS DIAGNOSTIC CORRELATION, BUT YOU RUN OFF AND GET SOME SLEEP, MARIA.

KURT, YOU GERUSE AND KITTY SHOULD TURN IN, TOO. IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY.

WE ARE ALL FINE, NICHOLAS.

RIGHT, THERE WILL BE TIME TO SLEEP WHEN WE HAVE DISCOVERED A CURE FOR THE GENETIC DESTABILIZATION.

IT IS DOWN TO ME AND CURSO NOW, BUT WE CANNOT DO ANYTHING HERE. SYMPHONY AND SAPHIRE ARE NEGATING OUR POWERS.

WE COULD EASILY OVERPOWER OUR DOWNTOWN GUARDS, BUT OPEN RESISTANCE WOULD ATTRACT THE FULL MIGHT OF CLOUD NINE SECURITY.

WE MUST BE AS DEVILS AS OUR CAPTORS.

WELL SAID, KITTY.

IF INDEED YOU ARE SHE, THOUGH I THINK NOT.

A METAMORPH!

EITHER TIRED OR DESTABILIZED, IT IS HAVING TROUBLE MAINTAINING ITS ILLUSION.

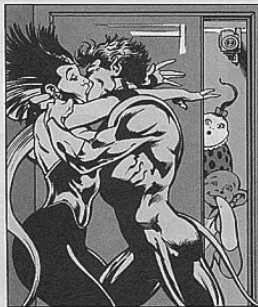
I SUSPECTED AN IMPOSTOR.

SHE... IT SPOKE TOO FREELY OF ACCESSING PETER'S FILE IN FRONT OF THESE SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS.

KITTY WOULD NEVER BE SO INDISCREET.

YAWN!

THE SPIRIT IS WILLING, KURT, BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK... AND SLEEP IS ESSENTIAL.



FORTUNATELY, PETER WANTS US TO BELIEVE HE IS FAIR AND REASONABLE. SO OUR CELL IS FREE OF SURVEILLANCE.

HE ALSO KNOWS I HAVE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO TELEPORT BLIND, AND EVERYWHERE WE HAVE BEEN IN CLOUD NINE IS MONITORED BY SECURITY CAMERAS.

WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING, KURT?

CAN YOUR STELLAR SENSORS VERIFY KITTY'S CURRENT LOCATION?

YES, THE SENSORS ARE NOT RELIANT ON ANY POWER, AND THE CLOUD NINE SECURITY FORCE DID NOT RECOGNIZE THE SHARDPLASMON CIRCUITRY FOR WHAT IT IS.

VERY WELL. WHEN WE LEFT KITTY SHE WAS ON THIS LEVEL, EIGHTY-SEVEN POINT FIVE METERS NORTH NORTHEAST OF THIS CELL.

BRYAN IS ALSO HERE ON THE LEVEL ABOVE—KURT! YOU ARE DEMATERIALIZING.

NO, MERELY INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE, FROM THE DATA NICHOLAS COLLECTED, THAT THE ENTRANCE TO THE DIMENSION I TELEPORT THROUGH CONSTANTLY SURROUNDS ME.

IT DISTORTS LIGHT, ABSORBING AND DISPLACING IT SO THAT I APPEAR TO BE IN SHADOW IN LIGHT...

—AND VIRTUALLY INVISIBLE IN DEEP SHADOW.

MORE IMPORTANTLY, I BELIEVE IT IS POSSIBLE FOR ME TO TELEPORT BLIND IF I HAVE THE PRECISE COORDINATES OF A SAFE ARRIVAL POINT.

INCORRECT. KITTY IS THREE LEVELS DOWN AND OVER EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIFTY METERS TO THE SOUTH OF OUR POSITION.

MY SPATIAL AWARENESS IS INFALLIBLE. IT NEEDS TO BE SO THAT I CAN NAVIGATE WHEN I TELEPORT.

THE KITTY WE WORKED ALONGSIDE IS AN IMPOSTOR. YOU ARE DETECTING THE REAL KITTY.

SHE IS NOT ALONE. MESSIAN, KYLLIN, ALESTAIR, AND MACROMAX ARE NEARHER. THEIR LIFEFORMS SUGGEST THEY ARE UNCONSCIOUS.

YOU MEAN TO TELEPORT TO KITTY?

YES.

WILL YOU TAKE ME?

IT IS TOO DANGEROUS. I COULD MATERIALIZE INSIDE AN OBJECT, A WALL, A FLOOR OR EVEN ANOTHER PERSON.

SYNTHON MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP. MY POWERS HAVE RETURNED.



I HAVE NEVER KNOWN THE FEAR OF SUCH EMPTINESS.



OTHERWORLD--A REALM OF ANCIENT MAGIC BEYOND SPACE AND TIME.

THE ENERGY MATRIX IS BEGINNING TO COLLAPSE IN UPON ITSELF.

I DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD HAPPEN SO QUICKLY.

WITHOUT IT THE CORP WILL FALL APART.

YOU WILL LOSE CONTROL OF THE MULTI-VERSE, RAYNA.

I HAVE NO DESIRE TO CONTROL IT. I WILL CONVEY THE DEATH OF THE MATRIX SATURNINE.

BUT HOW CAN OTHERWORLD SURVIVE WITHOUT THE MATRIX?

THE MATRIX WAS A FOCUS FOR THE MAGICAL ENERGY THAT PERMEATES THE MULTI-VERSE.

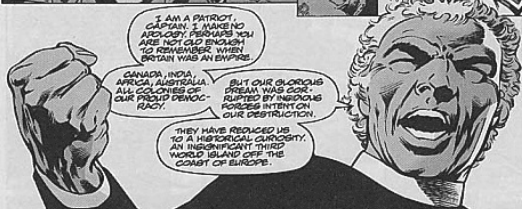
NOW THAT IT IS SPREAD THROUGHOUT THE INFINITY OF ALTERNATE REALITIES ONCE MORE...

...IT WILL BE SAFE FROM ABUSE BY MY FATHER OR ANY OTHER WHO SEEKS GODHOOD.

THE MAGIC OF OTHER-WORLD WILL SUSTAIN ME AND MY STARLIGHT CITADEL. I HAVE NONE OF THE AMBITION OR APPETITE THAT DROVE MY FATHER.

NOR WILL I INTERFERE IN THE AFFAIRS OF MAN AS MERCYN DID.

EVEN NOW, AS OTHERWORLD'S GREATEST CHAMPION FACES CERTAIN DEATH, I AM SWORN TO STAY MY HAND.







ELSEWHERE...

WHO ARE ALL THESE PEOPLE, KURT?

NO IDEA, KITTY. THEY WERE BEING HELD IN THE SAME SUSPENDED ANIMATION TUBES AS YOU, SO WE ASSUMED THEY WERE PRISONERS, TOO.

THEY'RE R.O.X. AGENTS.



YOU KNOW THEM, ALISTAIRE?

GABRIEL AND MICHAEL ARE OLD FRIENDS.

BOOZING BUDDIES WOULD BE A MORE ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF OUR RELATIONSHIP.



IT'S REALLY GOOD TO SEE YOU AFTER SO LONG.

DEFINE "SO LONG." WEEKS? MONTHS? YEARS?

SKIP THE MULTIPLE CHOICE. WHAT YEAR IS THIS?

1993!

'93?! CRIPPLETON. SHYTHE HAD HAD US ON ICE FOR OVER FIVE YEARS!

THIS IS AWFUL. I'LL NEED A BANK LOAN TO PAY THE FINE ON MY LIBRARY BOOKS.



THE LAST THING I REMEMBER WAS THE EXPLOSION IN THE CAVERN BENEATH BRADDOCK MANOR.



YEAH, WE HAD THE WARPIES HID THERE BECAUSE MR. MICEL CRIPPLETON-SHYTHE— MINISTER FOR DEFENSE AND CONFIDANT OF PRIME MINISTER THATCHER— WANTED TO BUILD A WARPIE ARMY.

HE SUCCEEDED, BUT SOME MYSTERIOUS MENACE IS ATTACKING THEM. THEY ARE ALL LOSING THEIR POWERS.



BRIAN IS LOSING HIS POWERS, TOO.

BUT NOBODY DID IT TO HIM. THE MAGIC LIGHT JUST WENT AWAY.

DO YOU MEAN HIS ENERGY AURA, MEGAN?

YES, THE OTHER COLORS. THEY WENT DULL AND BRIAN CHANGED.



MEGGAN CAN SEE AURAS OF RADIATED LIFE FORCE BUT BRIAN'S LOSS OF POWER CAN'T BE RELEVANT TO THE CLOUD NINE PARAMOUNTS.

BUT GO IS THE WARPERS! THEY HAVE THE SAME LIGHT AS BRIAN.

HIS POWER IS DRAWN FROM THE OTHERWORLD ENERGY MATRIX.

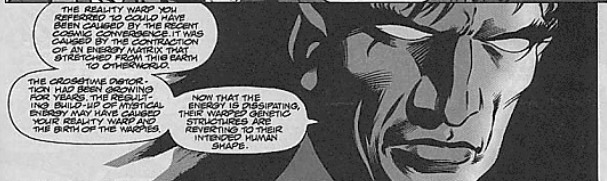
THAT CAN ONLY MEAN THAT THEY'RE NOT MUTANTS.



WE AGREE, THE R.G.X. WAS CREATED IN RESPONSE TO THE SUDDEN APPEARANCE OF PARA-HUMAN CHILDREN AFTER A REALITY WARP EVENT CENTERED ON THE U.K.

WE BELIEVED THE WARPERS WERE OF MYSTICAL ORIGIN BECAUSE OF A COINCIDENCE BETWEEN THE LOCATION OF BIRTHS AND LEY LINES.

OUR SUPERIORS DISMISSED OUR THEORY AS NEW AGE HOKUM.



THE REALITY WARP YOU REFERRED TO COULD HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY THE RECENT COSMIC CONVERGENCE. IT WAS CAUSED BY THE CONTRACTION OF AN ENERGY MATRIX THAT STRETCHED FROM THIS EARTH TO OTHERWORLDS.

THE CROSSTIME DISTORTION HAD BEEN GROWING FOR YEARS. THE RESULTING BUILD-UP OF MYSTICAL ENERGY MAY HAVE CAUSED YOUR REALITY WARP AND THE BIRTH OF THE WARPERS.

NOW THAT THE ENERGY IS DISSIPATING, THEIR WARPED GENETIC STRUCTURES ARE REVERTING TO THEIR INTENDED HUMAN SHAPE.



WHICH MEANS THAT YOU COULD NEVER HAVE BEEN SUFFERING FROM GENETIC DESTABILIZATION.

I KNEW I SAW PETER PRESS HIS BELT STUD AS THE ALARM SIGNALED YOUR ILLNESS.

MY ILLNESS WAS CONTRIVED TO ALLY US TO PETER'S CAUSE.

JUST LIKE HE MADE BRIAN THINK HE'D HURT MEGGAN.



OH, KURT, WE MUST HELP BRIAN. HE'S ALL ALONE...

DO NOT WORRY, MEGGAN. CERISE HAS ALREADY GIVEN ME BRIAN'S COORDINATES.



I WILL TELEPORT TO HIM RIGHT AWAY. I CANNOT!

MY POWER IS GONE.

WHICH CAN ONLY MEAN...



"WE HAVE
BEEN DIS-
COVERED."

SURRENDER
YOUR POWERS
HAVE BEEN
NEUTRALIZED
RESISTANCE IS
USELESS.

WE DON'T STAND
A CHANCE WHILE
THOSE LITTLE WPS
ARE BLOCKING OUR
MUTANT ABILITIES,
KYLIN.

THEY ARE MISGUIDED
INNOCENTS, MICHAEL--
THE SNOODS OF ZYZZA
SHOWED ME THAT--

--AND SINCE OUR
GAILER WOULD
NEVER CONSIDER
MY TALENT TO RE-
PRODUCE BOUND
AS A THREAT,
I MAY BE
ABLE TO DIS-
HEARTEN SOME OF OUR
LESS AGGRESSIVE
OPPONENTS...

WITH THE
ROAR OF AN
EE ZATHAN
ON ZSODASHA!

GRRRRARG!

GULP!



Y'DINNA
SCARE US W/
YER DAST
NOISES.

IT SCARED
ME!

MEEP
MEEP

YEAH, LET'S
GET OUT OF
HERE!







HE'S NOT MOVING. I'VE KILLED HIM!

HE WAS A TRAITOR. YOU DID YOUR DUTY.

PETER, PETER!



THERE'S A BIG FIGHT ON LEVEL SIX.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? THAT AREA IS OFF LIMITS TO ALL PERSONNEL.

I SAID THAT. I DID, REALLY BUT THE OTHERS WOULDN'T LISTEN.

THEY SAID THE CLOUD NINE ELITE ARE BIG BULLIES AND THEY WENT TO HELP EXCALIBUR.

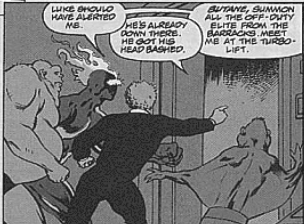
EXCALIBUR ARE FREE?!



LIKE SHOULD HAVE ALERTED ME.

HE'S ALREADY DOWN THERE. HE GOT HIS HEAD BASHED.

BUTANE, SUMMON ALL THE OFF-DUTY ELITE FROM THE BARRACKS. MEET ME AT THE TURBO-LIFT.



THIS IS WRONG, PLUMES. WE'RE NOT MEANT TO HURT PEOPLE.



I DON'T LIKE IT NEITHER, OAK, BUT WE GOTTA GO.

RIGHT, WE WOULDN'T WANT PETER TO THINK WE'RE TRAITORS, TOO.





ROMA?!

EXCUSE ME
FOR NOT
GETTING UP,
BUT I CAN'T.

I THINK
MY NECK IS
BROKEN.

I THINK I COULD
OVERLOOK A LITTLE
INTERFERENCE THIS
ONE TIME.

THOUGH YOUR
INJURIES ARE
EXTENSIVE, CAPTAIN,
I COULD EASILY
REPAIR THE
DAMAGE...

... BUT FOR MY OATH
NEVER TO INTER-
FERE IN YOUR
LIFE.

BUT WHAT'S THE CATCH?
EXCUSE MY CYNICISM...
YOU DON'T USUALLY MAKE
HOUSE CALLS.

THERE IS NO "CATCH".
I SEEK ONLY TO REPAIR
MY DEBT TO YOU.

YOUR PRESENT
SITUATION IS ONE
IN PART TO MY
PAST MANIPU-
LATIONS.

IN RECENT TIMES YOU
DID NOT NEED THE ARCAIC
CIRCUITRY IN YOUR
UNIFORM TO COLLECT AND
STORE MYSTICAL ENERGY
BECAUSE YOU WERE BEING
SUPER-CHARGED BY THE
CONDENSING ENERGY
MATRIX.

BUT, THE MATRIX IS NO
MORE, AND SINCE THE
COSTUME YOU WEAR WAS
SYNCHRONIZED TO THE
METABOLISM OF CAPTAIN
MARSHALL OF EARTH
998...



IT WAS YOUR
CHOICE. YOU
COULD HAVE
SURREN-
DERED.

NO, NEVER!
YOU KNOW
THAT.

BUT YOU
DID NOT.

... YOUR
POWERS
BEGAN TO
FAIL.
I HAVE
CORRECTED
THIS
DEFICIENCY.

BUT, IF YOU
KNEW ALL THIS,
WHY DID YOU
LET ME TAKE
THAT BEATING?

YOU HAVE GROWN,
BRIAN BRADDOCK.
YOU'RE THE HEART
OF A WARRIOR. IT
HONORS YOUR FATHER'S
MEMORY.

WE WOULD
BE VERY
PROUD.

FARE
THEE WELL,
BRIAN.







NO, YOU HED TO US, PETER. YOU SAID WE WOULD BE HEROES, CHAMPIONS OF JUSTICE--NOT KILLERS.

DESPERATE TIMES CALL FOR DESPERATE MEASURES, OAK.

ANYONE NOT WITH US IS AGAINST US.

YOU ARE ON YOUR OWN.

SO BE IT, BUT I WILL FIGHT ON WHILE BREATH REMAINS IN MY BODY.

I WILL NOT BETRAY OUR COUNTRY.

YOU DON'T WANT TO DO THAT, YOU'LL HURT YOURSELF.

I WAS GIVEN MY NAME AND COSTUME ALONG WITH MY POWERS.

I'M NOT A PATRIOT. I DON'T CARE ABOUT COUNTRIES OR GOVERNMENTS.

I CARE ABOUT PEOPLE... JUSTICE... RIGHT AND WRONG...

--AND YOU ARE WRONG! VERY WRONG!

IF I WAS YOUR ENEMY, I'D PUSH YOUR FLAPPING JAW THROUGH THE MASH OF SCHEMING PARANOIA YOU CALL A BRAIN.

THAT IS WHAT HE WANTS TO BE A MARTYR. LET HIM GO, CAPTAIN...

HE NO LONGER POSSES A THREAT.

HE IS A MISGUIDED FOOL, DRIVEN BY DREAMS OF BECOMING A PATRIOTIC CHAMPION.

HE BELIEVED HE WAS WRONG RIGHT.

HE IS NOT AN EVIL MAN.

DON'T DARE TO JUDGE ME, YOU FILTHY KRAUT...





HI, GUYS.
BET YOU DIDN'T
EXPECT ME TO
SHOW UP
AGAIN.

PHOENIX!



WHO
ELSE?

RACHEL!

WHAT'S WRONG?
I HAVEN'T CHANGED
THAT MUCH, HAVE
I?



THE LAST TIME WE SAW YOU,
RACHEL'S MIND--YOUR MIND--
WAS DEAD. THE PHOENIX
CONSCIOUSNESS INHABITED
YOUR BODY...

AND YOU
HAD THE ASPECT
OF THE "GOOD"
PHOENIX.

YOU WERE
WEARING THE
GREEN PHOENIX
COSTUME!

I SEE, YOU
THOUGHT I
WAS THE DARK
PHOENIX!



SORRY I
SCARED YOU...
BUT GREEN IS
REALLY NOT MY
COLOR.

AND YOU'VE GOT
TO ADMIT, THE
DARK PHOENIX
MAY HAVE BEEN
A THREAT TO ALL
LIFE IN THE
UNIVERSE...

...BUT SHE
HAD GREAT
TASTE IN
COSTUMES.



OH, RACHEL,
IT IS YOU.

WHO ELSE WOULD BE
SO OUTRAGEOUS JUST
TO MAKE A FASHION
STATEMENT.

HOW ARE YOU
RACHEL? I MEAN,
ARE YOU WELL...
WHAT HAPPENED?

GIVE HER A CHANCE,
KURT. WE'RE BACK
TOGETHER, THAT'S
WHAT COUNTS.

SORRY,
KITTY.
I'M NOT
SAYING.

IT'S GOING
TO BE JUST
LIKE THE GOOD
OLD DAYS.

WHA... BUT,
WHY?

MY MEMORY IS
INTACT NOW, KITTY.
I REMEMBER
EVERYTHING.

I CAN'T LOOK
AT YOU WITHOUT
THINKING OF THE
KURT WAGNER AND
KATE PRYDE I
KNEW ON MY
EARTH.

THEY'RE DEAD,
AND THOSE
RESPONSIBLE
STILL ENSLAVE
MY WORLD.

I CAN'T LIVE
HERE, KNOWING
THAT THE POWER
OF THE PHOENIX
COULD MAKE A
DIFFERENCE.

I HAVE
TO TRY.

I'M GOING
BACK TO THE
FUTURE.

NEXT ISSUE!
BACK TO THE FUTURE

SWORD STROKES

MC MARVEL COMICS GROUP
387 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

TERRY KAVANAGH
EDITOR
MARK POWERS
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Attention correspondents: if you don't want your full address printed, please be sure to tell us so!

Dear Sword Strokes,

I realize that this is coming a little late, but the truth is, due to...um...circumstances, I didn't get the chance to read issues #50 through #52 of EXCALIBUR until now. Reading that much EXCALIBUR in such a short period of time was astounding. I wish I had the next dozen or so issues to read right now. The stories and art in this comic are better than in any other comic that I buy, and I spend approximately \$40 a week on comics).

Anyway, the reason I am writing is that reading your Sword Strokes letters pages, I noticed that there were no letters regarding issue #54. So what gives? Did nobody like it? Did you get no letters? Or did you just forget to print a letters page in issue #54 or #55? Well, whatever the case, I thought issue #54 was great. It was a well written story which was amusing, but still ended on a serious note for Brian Braddock. I laughed for a good five minutes when I saw Captain Britain's face as he quoted, "Orl wiv is ead. Orl wiv is ead."

Well, as I said, this letter praising issue #54 is a little late, so it will never see print, but I just wanted you to be sure that someone out here thought it was worth reading. Thanks for listening.

Alexander Machula
66 Gannett Crescent
Kilmart, British Columbia
Canada V8C 1P3

Never see print? We couldn't let that happen, Alexander! And since you were wondering...we only received a few letters on issue #54, and after sacrificing Sword Strokes in issue #54 for a Unicorn ad (it was for a good cause), and in issue #59 for an extra page of art (an excellent cause), we needed to do a little bit of catch up!

Dear Sword Strokes,

In what issue did Meggan join Excalibur? Can you send me a copy?

Jonathan Sibug
1709 Beach Park Blvd.
Foster City, CA 94404

You'll want to check out the EXCALIBUR Special Edition #1 for a condensed retelling of how Meggan came to be a member of Excalibur. Unfortunately, Jonathan, we can't send you a copy. We don't have any comics here available to the public — we make 'em, but we don't sell 'em! Check out the local shops in your area that carry comics, or try one of the mail order companies that advertise in these pages. Good luck!

Dear Sword Strokes,

"Braddock of the Jungle" was, well, very, um, interesting. Yeah, interesting! Seriously, it was great to see Captain America, Jim Rhodes and the Black Panther team up with Excalibur (sort of). After all, Shadowcat and Lockheed were the only members they definitely recognized. Meggan was Incognito, and Brian, er, Captain Britain, uh, Jungle Man, I mean Captain Wakanda was, very,

um, you know, he was, oh never mind!

Anyway, the Nightcrawler/Cerise adventure was very funny and exciting, if all too brief. I'd really like to see their relationship expanded on. After all, here we have two outsiders from society who feel a mutual attraction. This has definite story possibilities! Speaking of possibilities, is there any chance of seeing the Knight Errant again? Perhaps he could visit the Crazy Gang's wonderland, or try to go after Sat-yr-nine. Either course of action would most probably lead him into contact with Excalibur.

Before I go, I must compliment Scott Kolins on his beautifully rendered cover. Let's see more of Scott's work on other Marvel titles in the future.

Ben Herman
45 Runyon Place
Scarsdale, NY 10583

This very issue, the relationship between Kurt and Cerise takes a giant leap forward, Ben — but watch for some startling developments!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Excalibur's Wakanda adventure was great, although Lord Braddock's becoming a "Jungle Man" was a bit extreme. I really enjoyed seeing the Black Panther and the new Iron Man, too.

Is there a possibility of more appearances by the Knight Errant? He's a pretty unique character and he'd make a great addition to Excalibur's ranks.

I've been with you guys since issue #1, and I must say that EXCALIBUR is my favorite Marvel title. Keep up the good work and please — please — bring back Phoenix! Alexander Mesa

(Address withheld upon request)

Issue #61 must have made you a very happy reader, Alexander! (Everybody read that one? Phoenix is back, guys — no need to write any more letters telling us how much you want good old Rachel to return, okay??)

Dear Kitty,

Will you marry me?

Bill Kemp
2621 Thompson Drive
Bowling Green, KY 42104

We'll be sure to forward this one to Kitty herself, Bill!

Dear Brian Braddock, the fictional super hero,

This is being written around midnight, because in my zeal of writing to about two dozen comic books, I forgot to write to you first, Will, listen up.

Asking Meggan for her hand in marriage was an admirable thing to do, but it wasn't handled right. For starters, this thing was done by way of making up to her. This is the worst way you can do this. Some people have called it a dirty trick. Other people have called it worse things which can't be printed on a letters page. And Meggan, being unfam-

iliar with whether or not it's part of true love, went along.

Now, I understand your feelings for her. Perhaps you're trying desperately to remain in love. The fact that she accepted simply means she was taken aback and didn't know what to say. It was almost as if she were being manipulated into saying "yes." Considering how much Excalibur has fought to avoid further manipulation, this is really low.

However, I know of no other comic book character who is in "true" love with her. Nightcrawler wouldn't be seeing Meggan off panel because you've taught him to be very careful, just in case.

So, as a result, you think you're the only right one for her? Let me remind you that your drinking problem, though in remission, can bounce back any time. Also, your ever-present guilt over killing or hurting various people from your UK comics (many of which still have yet to be reprinted) tends to cloud your judgement occasionally.

I think Meggan deserves someone else — like a male counterpart with similar powers, or perhaps an ordinary man. I predict that if you get to the wedding, something's going to happen. A death, perhaps, or maybe a surprise.

Well, if you can curb any past behavioral difficulties, you may succeed, but for how long is still up in the air. As you are often So here's hoping you find happiness in whatever betrays you. And same to Meggan.

Eric "The Yank" Draves
4123 N. McVicker Ave.
Chicago, IL 60634

Guess this is one for Brian personally. Eric. But, we really don't think you're giving Meggan enough credit...she is able to —and does— think for herself!

Dear Sword Strokes,

Re: EXCALIBUR #61.

This is probably the best issue of EXCALIBUR I've seen from Alan Davis. The artwork was great (as usual).

The difference this time was the story. It was interesting and well executed. It was great to see Phoenix again. It was also nice to see the team actually practicing for once. And I must add that I enjoyed seeing a little more of the personal side of the characters; Kurt giving Brian advice, and Brian actually taking it into consideration and acting upon it. I have to say that I am most impressed with the increased maturity that Brian has displayed. For too long he has been portrayed as the fool and an incapable hero. Finally we are seeing him as he truly is and deserves to be seen.

Good work on this one, guys. Let's keep it up.

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Thanks for a thoughtful letter, Shane. There'll be more on issue #61 next Sword Strokes!

NEXT ISSUE: Phoenix comes full circle as Excalibur takes to the future! And the haunting secret of Widget is revealed!